

# Transportation Access Issue Team Meeting

## February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2002

### Agenda

- Public comments
- Review Issue Descriptions
- Develop Desired Conditions (small group)
- Lunch
- Discuss Desired Conditions (large group)
- Assignments and Agenda for next meeting

The meeting began with public participation. Comments were received from Gilbert Daniels, a resident of the Sisters area. His use of an historical road was denied through private property. His research documents the existence of the Willamette Valley-Cascade Mt. Wagon Road as it extends through public and private lands in the area NE of Sisters. The road appears of the BLM Cadastral Survey plat that was prepared in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. County records acknowledge the road as a public road. The problem involves the closure of the road by landowners denying access through private property and preventing the public from having access to public lands. Mr. Daniels was advised that the issue of denying access through private land along a public road was a legal matter that would have to be addressed in court. Mr. Daniels would like to see the no trespassing signs removed from the boundary of the public lands. Arrangements have been made with BLM staff to investigate.

This issue relates to our planning effort in two ways. The need to recognize the existence of historical roads through public lands and the need to identify needs for the acquisition of easements. These roads are described as Legacy Roads by Deschutes County and will be identified on maps that will be available at our next meeting. Easement acquisition needs will be identified by the Land Ownership Team.

A discussion of the Issue Descriptions followed. A comment was made that the Land Use Plan should serve to streamline the processing of right of way applications in the future to accommodate the increasing requests for electric service in this area of rapid growth. By identifying row corridors in the plan and confining proposed routes to an existing corridor location, BLM could use an abbreviated report such as a Categorical Exclusion (CE) or a Determination of NEPA Adequacy, (DNA) rather than writing a more detailed Environmental Assessment. (EA). A problem (issue) may be that many utility service requests extend to a single residence and would be located outside of a designated corridor.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 25<sup>th</sup>, 9am – 4pm, Redmond Library.

Homework: Develop criteria or methods addressing how we could meet the Desired Conditions. Send your ideas to Phil Paterno by February 18<sup>th</sup>.

Think of the Desired Conditions in terms of **What we want to manage for**.

Think of the Criteria or Methods in terms of **How** to get to the Desired Condition.

Phil will bring maps to show the following:

1. The, sensitive wildlife areas, the planning area boundary and land status.
2. Rights of way authorized by BLM
3. The existing BLM transportation plan
4. All State and County roads, and a map showing historical public roads.
5. Alan will provide maps of the Redmond transportation system.
6. Sarah will provide maps of the Crook Co. transportation system.
7. Mark will provide State transportation maps.
8. Brian will bring ODF&W wildlife habitat inventory maps.
9. Bill McCaffrey will bring maps of the Oregon Military Department transportation plan.
10. Steve Jorgenson will bring maps of the proposed La Pine Airport and maps of the Bend Airport.

Existing projects with current or anticipated NEPA analysis, located in the planning area:

1. Huntington Ranch, access and utility rights of way. Two roads, (primary and interim secondary) natural gas, sewer, treated effluent, Avion water, electric service, TV cable and telephone.
2. Proposed widening of Hwy 126 along the corridor between Redmond and Powell Butte.
3. Two proposals by Deschutes County for emergency access to subdivisions in LaPine.
4. Land exchange with Central Oregon Irrigation District.
5. Land exchange with Jim Young for the Casey Tract located along the Little Deschutes River.
6. Mid-State Electric Coop., Inc., utility line, La Pine.
7. Land Use Permit, Oregon Military Department, training exercises, east of Powell Buttes, July 2002.

## Transportation and Access Desired Conditions

1. A functional and efficient transportation system that is coordinated with Federal, State and local jurisdictions and satisfies the intent of the law. A transportation system that provides links between local communities and is designed with consideration for sensitive resources.
2. Future corridors for transportation systems should be anticipated and identified in the plan.
3. Hwy 97 will eventually be designed as a controlled access highway, with frontage roads to accommodate local access needs.
4. A transportation system that is designed to accommodate public needs with certain areas identified for unlimited vehicle use and all other areas designated as closed, unless considered for an exception.
5. Access approach locations (intersections) from State and County roads to public lands should be reviewed and approved by the respective jurisdictions.
6. Conflicts will be avoided if possible or mitigated.
7. Roads, trails and access which balances public needs with resource protection.
8. Planned, designated, guided development that protects resources along transportation corridors.
9. Planned transportation and access that is functional, efficient and safe while minimizing development for the protection of resources.
10. Highway realignment outside of the airport clear zones.
11. Minimal access to/from existing and planned regional highways.
12. Transportation systems are developed (present) based on common guidelines, developed by all relevant jurisdictions and provide consistency between jurisdictions.
13. Transportation systems are consolidated or replaced to reduce environmental impacts.
14. Transportation systems are an inter-regional coordinated effort to support approved land uses that cannot be met on private, State or County lands.
15. Transportation systems are identified based on, intrinsic values of public lands, wildlife habitat and open space, recreational access, protection of sensitive resources, emergency access needs to private lands, traditional and cultural uses, expansion of existing rights of way, alternative commute or connection options.

# **Transportation & Access Issue Descriptions**

## **A. Regional Transportation Systems**

There is an increasing demand for public lands to provide Regional Transportation corridors.

1. Issue: Due to rapid population growth and increasing traffic volumes, the use of existing regional transportation corridors is approaching full capacity in some areas. The Brothers - La Pine RMP was completed in 1989. Since that time, the population of Crook, Deschutes and Jefferson County has increased 49.5%, from 102,745 to 153,558. Projections indicate continued growth for the region.

1a. Issue: The Oregon Department of Transportation anticipates the likely failure of the Yew Avenue Interchange. The City of Redmond expects the failure of the interchange to constrain economic development within the Urban Growth Boundary.

1b. Issue: A segment of Hwy. 126 that is located east of Redmond, extends through the "clear zones" associated with the runways on the north side of Redmond Airport. Population growth and increasing traffic volumes require future highway improvements. Realignment or widening of the highway cannot occur at the present location and must be placed outside of the "clear zone" areas which will eventually be used for extension of the runways.

2. Issue: The use of existing Hwy 27 from Hwy 20 to Prineville is physically not practical for commercial truck traffic and a need has been identified by Crook County to improve an existing BLM road to accommodate this use. Physical limitations imposed by the existing location of Hwy 27 prohibit feasible and economical upgrading. A proposal has been made to upgrade the BLM West Butte Road as it extends through public lands. Segments of the road would require realignment to negotiate grade.

3. Issue: In the past, transportation planning has not been coordinated thoroughly among local, State and Federal jurisdictions. This has resulted in the existence of numerous and unnecessary roads. Many County roads that were historically created do not provide connectivity or function to serve present transportation needs.

## **4. Long term Regional Transportation Planning**

4a. Issue: Regional transportation planners have identified a long term need for a Highway 97 bypass of the Redmond Urban Area. Traffic studies have not been projected beyond a 20 year period, however growth rates indicate that traffic volumes will exceed the capabilities of many existing transportation systems. A bypass corridor could likely extend east of the airport and connect with Highway 97 at the Quarry Road interchange.

4b. Issue: The long term plan for the Highway 97 corridor between Madras and La Pine includes the elimination of all direct, at grade access. This would serve to convert the highway to an expressway with a system of interchanges and frontage roads.

## **B. Local Transportation Systems**

1. Issue: In some areas there are numerous user created roads and trails on public lands that are in excess of public access needs. This results in resource damage and illegal activities such as dumping and theft of public resources. Many of these routes serve the same geographic areas or terminate abruptly without providing connectivity to other areas.
2. Issue: The reduction of the number of existing roads can limit access to certain public lands.
3. Issue: Many roads that access BLM administered lands from State and County roads have dangerous intersections with these improved highways and many are unnecessary.

## **C. Rights of Way**

1. Issue: With population growth projections, it is anticipated that there will continue to be a demand for new rights of way for access and utility services.
  - 1a. Granting rights of way through public lands could conflict with resource management, goals and objectives.
  - 1b. When BLM grants a right of way, the route is open to the public and could result in vandalism such as illegal dumping, wood cutting, indiscriminate off road vehicle use, and the harassment of wildlife. BLM has documented situations where public access has resulted in resources damage.
  - 1c. Granting rights of way for access and utility services to private land may increase road densities on public land.